Danielle Hawley

English 131

May 3, 2008

Fahrenheit 451- Final Project

A major theme, and what my collage represents, is censorship. Censorship is defined by Webster’s Dictionary as: the suppression of [speech](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_speech) or deletion of communicative material which may be considered objectionable, harmful or sensitive, as determined by a censor. Freedom of expression is one basic right that all Americans enjoy and it is protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. However, censorship is still noticeable in our nation.

Throughout Fahrenheit 451, the people were not allowed to think nor act on their own. The government controlled their intake of knowledge, not letting them explore the world around them. The community served as a prison, not allowing the inside life to come in. The town or country had no idea of the other communities around them. By being forbidden to read they could not read newspapers which would have kept them informed of the world around them. The government used “brain-washing” as a way to get the community where they wanted them. The town was based on entertainment and technology. Montag’s wife would spend all day in front of a wall that served as an interactive television. Books were controversial because it allowed the people to have their own thoughts and ask questions. The way our nation is going, people are reading less and less, depending on the television to inform them of what they need to know.

Our government system inhibits some censorship characteristics. We have our freedom of speech but it is limited. The practice of our religion is another issue that makes us fall into the government’s way. Censorship is taking place in our schools as well as community. Subjects that may ruffle some feathers are not taught due to the fact that some may be offended. Such issues such as evolution and The Holocaust are banned or only taught as a time-line. When the government controls what a teacher can teach then it is a sign of censorship. Not that I would want a teacher to teach others that life derived from a monkey, I feel that if it is necessary to make the lesson coherent then it should be allowed.

The first picture in my collage is of a lady who is standing in her house while it is being burned. This states the obvious, that knowledge from books was illegal. Our government has not become this extreme yet, but in the future I am sure they will not want others out thinking them. An example would be a more fuel efficient car. Without the purchasing of gas, the government has no money to waste.

The second picture (or word) is a monarchy. A monarchy is defined as: government having a hereditary chief of state with life tenure and powers varying from nominal to absolute. It is just stating the censorship rule. The government possessed and ran all aspects of the life of the people.

The picture of the cat and dog and the black and white reflects the groups who were offended by literature. This is where Bradbury comes to the realization of why books are not present in the society. In Montag’s discussion with Beatty mentions dog lovers offended by books about cats, and cat lovers offended by books about dogs. The reader can only assume which minority groups Bradbury was truly referring to.

The next illustration is of a man just sitting in front of a television. The government had the people basing their life on entertainment and just letting it pass you without doing anything important. If one of the most important jobs was burning books then something is wrong with the community.

The “brain washed” shirt is what Montag’s wife needs to wear around. She fits the role of an ignorant person. She feels no remorse about the death of Clarisse, because the government has taught them not to think love. The community is much like that of the polygamist compound. The people felt what they were doing was the only way in life. Yet, they knew no different.

The picture of the boy behind the cage represents the freedom of thought. The cage represents the government filtering what the people can and cannot think or do. A topic I picked up on in the book was the hint of religion. None of the characters showed a religion, but the book that Montag picked up from old woman’s house is The Bible. At the conclusion of the novel, Montag walks up the river to find survivors in the city after it was destroyed. In his walk, Montag remembers passages he read in his Bible from Ecclesiastes 3:1, "To everything there is a season," and Revelations 22:2, "And on either side of the river was there a tree of life...or the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The end of the world Montag has witnessed has a clear connection to the apocalypse in the Bible.

The picture of the supermodel, the “nerd,” and the quadruplets represent the fact that all must be the same. The picture of the supermodel versus Ugly Betty is one of the United States. We use censorship in advertisement to portray women as being beautiful and perfect. How many women in America actually look like the girls off of television or out of the magazines? We think that is how we should look and try to portray the way they do. Censorship and stereotyping can go hand in hand.

The last two pictures state the obvious; that the community is a whole and not one person sticks out. The books tell the story of one not being able to expand their knowledge.

Something I found interesting was that the 451 comes into place because that is the temperature at which paper burns. Just a little food for thought.